

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 219651
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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 R

DRAFTED BY ARA/CCA-WSSMITH:DPB
APPROVED BY ARA-AMB. VAKY
S/S :FWISNER

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO USINT HAVANA NIACT IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 219651

NODIS
CHEROKEE, FOR LYLE LANE FROM VAKY

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: SHUM, CU

SUBJECT: GUIDANCE ON RELEASED POLITICAL PRISONERS

1. WE ARE NOTIFYING PADRON THAT TEXT OF ANNOUNCEMENTS BEING SENT TO YOU. PLEASE TRANSMIT THROUGH GARCIA ON URGENT BASIS. WE PLAN TO RELEASE AT 10 A.M., AUG. 31. WOULD APPRECIATE ANY COMMENTS CUBAN SIDE MAY HAVE IN TIME TO MEET THAT DEADLINE.

2. PLEASE EXPLAIN THAT PRESS WILL DOUBTLESS HAVE MANY QUESTIONS AFTER RELEASES ISSUED. WE WILL ATTEMPT TO FIELD QUESTIONS IN SAME SPIRIT AND CONTEXT AS LANGUAGE OF ANNOUNCEMENTS THEMSELVES.

3. JUSTICE DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCEMENT:

ATTORNEY GENERAL GRIFFIN BELL ANNOUNCED TODAY THAT U.S.
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OFFICIALS WILL SHORTLY COMMENCE SCREENING IN CUBA FORTY-EIGHT PERSONS PREVIOUSLY IMPRISONED IN CUBA FOR CRIMES OF A POLITICAL NATURE AGAINST THE STATE AND WHO ARE NOW SEEKING ENTRY INTO THE UNITED STATES AS WELL AS THIRTY MEMBERS OF THEIR FAMILIES.

MR. BELL SAID THE CUBAN GOVERNMENT HAS ALREADY RELEASED

A NUMBER OF THESE PRISONERS AND, HE UNDERSTANDS, MORE WILL BE RELEASED IN THE WEEKS AHEAD.

THE SCREENING WILL BE UNDERTAKEN BY REPRESENTATIVES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE.

AFTER COMPLETING THE SCREENING PROCESS, THESE REPRESENTATIVES WILL REPORT TO THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, WHO WILL DETERMINE WHETHER HE SHOULD EXERCISE HIS DISCRETIONARY AUTHORITY PROVIDED UNDER SECTION 212 (D) (5) OF THE IMMIGRATION ACT AND PAROLE THESE RELEASED PRISONERS INTO THE UNITED STATES.

ALL WHO WOULD BE PAROLED MUST ALSO OTHERWISE BE ADMISSABLE UNDER THE IMMIGRATION AND NATIONALITY ACT.

THESE ARRANGEMENTS ARE THE RESULT OF DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN THE STATE DEPARTMENT'S INTEREST SECTION IN HAVANA AND CUBAN OFFICIALS.

MR. BELL SAID HE EXPECTED THAT ADDITIONAL APPLICATIONS TO ENTER THE UNITED STATES WOULD BE MADE. EACH APPLICANT WILL BE CONSIDERED ON HIS OR HER MERIT.

4. STATE DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCEMENT:

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THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE IS TODAY ANNOUNCING THAT SCREENING WILL SHORTLY BEGIN IN CUBA OF A NUMBER OF PERSONS PREVIOUSLY IMPRISONED FOR CRIMES AGAINST THE STATE AND WHO ARE APPLYING FOR ENTRY INTO THE U.S. THE CUBAN GOVERNMENT HAD ALREADY RELEASED A NUMBER OF THESE PRISONERS, AND, IT IS UNDERSTOOD, MAY RELEASE OTHERS IN THE WEEKS AHEAD.

THIS IS A MOST WELCOME DEVELOPMENT. ON MAY 20 OF LAST YEAR, PRESIDENT CARTER EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT THE CUBAN GOVERNMENT WOULD DEMONSTRATE A COMMITMENT TO HUMAN RIGHTS BY RELEASING MANY OF THE POLITICAL PRISONERS IT HAS HELD FOR A NUMBER OF YEARS. THE PRESENT ACTION IS A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION.

5. FYI: VAKY IS INFORMING PADRON THAT WE ARE SHOWING HIM RELEASE IN ADVANCE AS COURTESY. WE DO NOT INTEND TO NEGOTIATE LANGUAGE WITH THE CUBANS, BUT YOU SHOULD REPORT ANY SHARPLY ADVERSE REACTION IMMEDIATELY. CHRISTOPHER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: INSTRUCTIONS, TEXT, PRESS RELEASES, PRISONERS RELEASE, POLITICAL PRISONERS, CAT-C, CHEROKEE 08-29-78
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 29 aug 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE219651
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: WSSMITH:DPB
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X1
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: P840140-2443
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780811/aaaaajit.tel
Line Count: 112
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: eaab1759-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN NODS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 12 jul 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1569988
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GUIDANCE ON RELEASED POLITICAL PRISONERS
TAGS: SHUM, SOPN, CU, US
To: USINT HAVANA HAVANA
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/eaab1759-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014